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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/26/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [PGOV](#) [EU](#) [PO](#) [CU](#)  
SUBJECT: EU-CUBA MEETING IN NEW YORK: "USUAL STUFF" AND A  
PROMISE TO MEET AGAIN

Classified By: Classified By: DCM David Ballard, Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. ( C ) Summary: Paulo Lourenco, diplomatic advisor to Portuguese FM Amado, called DCM to provide a readout of September 24 meeting in New York between the EU and Cuba. Meeting was described as "the usual stuff," with both sides listening and explaining impediments to engagement, but no resolution achieved. The meeting ended with a promise to set up a more formal meeting during the Slovenian EU presidency. End Summary

¶2. (C) Paulo Lourenco, Portuguese FM Amado,s diplomatic advisor, called DCM September 25 to provide a promised readout of the September 24 meeting in New York between EU and Cuban delegations. Lourenco did not attend the meeting and spoke from notes. The EU side consisted of FM Amado, representing the Presidency of the European Council, an unnamed representative of Javier Solana (Brussels reports that it was Political Director Robert Cooper), and Louis Michel, EU Development Commissioner. The Cuban side was FM Perez Roque and two or three other unnamed officials.

No Surprises  
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¶3. (C) Laurencio said the meeting started with the Cuban side giving its &usual speech,8 and that what they had to say contained &no surprises.8 FM Perez Roque spoke of his country being &under siege8 but nonetheless eager to &remove the obstacles8 to better relations with the EU. Amado agreed that that was the purpose of the meeting and Louis Michel highlighted areas of potential cooperation, including trade, natural disasters, and &international cooperation.8 Michel said that while these are areas in which both sides might move ahead, the EU also needed to be able to discuss human rights issues with Cuba.

Here,s Why We Can,t Just Get Along  
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¶4. (C) Perez Roque seized the opportunity to list Cuba,s three primary grievances with the EU: 1) The 2003 sanctions, although suspended, should be lifted permanently; 2) Continued dissatisfaction with the EU &common position8 on Cuba; 3) Unhappiness with the last paragraph of the Trans-Atlantic Summit statement criticizing the human rights situation in Cuba. If these three things are taken care of, Cuba could envisage a constructive relationship with the EU. Amado then asked if Perez Roque understood the basis of the EU,s ongoing reservations about a better relationship, and suggested that Cuba needed to think about what those reservations are. The Cuban Foreign Minister asked for an explanation. Amado said that the EU,s concerns were primarily related to political prisoners and other human rights issues and asked if Cuba was ready to discuss these

concerns. Perez Roque's immediate response was, &Can we also discuss secret CIA flights and prisons?8 At that point, according to Lourenco, the conversation was essentially over.

¶15. (C) The meeting ended with both sides agreeing to meet again more &formally8 during the upcoming Slovenian EU presidency.

¶16. (C) Comment: We doubt if this is just an example of the Portuguese telling us what we want to hear. They have consistently told us that they favor engagement with Cuba but that such engagement must absolutely have as a key component formal discussion of democracy and human rights in Cuba. Amado and company appear to have kept up the pressure in that regard. The lack of any resolution was in keeping with the low expectations the Portuguese had for the meeting.  
Hoffman